

2014-2015 Altarnun Parish Council Annual Report

INTRODUCTION: Following the resignations of Mrs Retallack and Ms Mason during the summer 2014, the Parish Councillors appointed Mr C Dowler as Parish Council Chair and welcomed two new Councillors on board - Mrs Debra Branch and Mr Chris Bloomfield.

Parish Council meetings continue to be held on the first Wednesday of each month, with three meetings a year being staged at Bolventor. During the year Council members have participated in various consultative surveys, networking events, pre- planning application consultative exercises and Cornwall Council Planning Sub – Committee hearings in support of local residents.

Strategically, the Parish Council have thought long and hard about whether or not to invest time, funds and energy into producing a Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan. As the year 2014 drew to a close it decided against launching this initiative at this time.

Generally speaking, 2014/15 was a year of stabilisation and consolidation in terms of business. Issues addressed followed the pattern of previous years including:-

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT: Consideration of planning applications including individual wind-turbines, barn conversions, building renovations or extensions and new build affordable and/or open market homes remained a key activity. Pre-application consultation took place for a couple of potential affordable home/market home developments at Five Lanes. Both sit outside the existing building development boundaries and both offered to deliver contributions to demand for affordable homes for local people. The first featured a small development known as the “Gratton Field” site and very late into the financial year there was an exhibition by Wain Homes proposing the expansion of the Fairfield Park estate with a much larger development. Both generated considerable interest amongst Parishioners and Councillors alike, with well-attended public meetings.

The Parish Council has made it clear that whilst it will welcome and support the delivery of affordable housing for its local residents and managed population growth, proposals must reflect the rural character of this moorland Parish. Successful schemes must overcome known sewage capacity pressures; avoid adding to the existing flood risk threat; align with education capacity & work opportunities; address access and road safety concerns; recognise the extremely limited availability of public amenities, services, community facilities, public transport and parking. Increasingly, Parish Council thought has turned to the view that all future schemes will need to include initiatives to assist the Parish Council to strengthen and improve the infrastructure of this rural Parish. The Parish Council have also offered support to local families facing opposition to their planning proposals. Councillor’s Scott and Richardson have both attended the CC Planning Sub Committee to successfully present Parish Council input to several cases.

ENVIRONMENT: The Parish Council exercises its responsibility to promote and protect the environment for the benefit of all residents, local businesses (reliant upon tourism and agriculture) and visitors. The Parish Council renewed its Local Maintenance Partnership Agreement with Cornwall Council. It maintains specific public footpaths and funds the regular herbicide treatment of the roadside in Trewint, Five Lanes & Altarnun. Residents and Councillors continue to monitor water levels in order to avoid further flooding in Altarnun village centre. During the year it secured a site upon which to erect a replacement public toilet in Altarnun Village. In the interim, St. Nonna’s PCC have kindly agreed to allow the Altarnun Church Hall toilets to remain open to the public. Investigation into the provision of a defibrillator has also commenced following an approach from a local resident about similar schemes in nearby Parishes. Noise disturbance complaints and nuisances such as litter, fly tipping and dog fouling have arisen and been addressed, as appropriate.

HIGHWAYS: The Council works tirelessly with the local Highways Agency/Cormac to identify and fix damaged road surfaces. Twice a year there is an inspection, followed by a 6 monthly works cycle to address issues found. Strong winds saw fallen trees block roads in the year which had to be cleared.

The pro-active reporting of blocked drains and pot holes has been helpful in directing scarce resources. Speeding vehicles remain a cause for concern, with the Parish Council, local Police and Cormac constantly seeking fresh solutions. The Parish Council supported the extension of the dual carriageway at Temple. It continues to press for a resolution to recurring road safety failures at Plusha Junction.

COMMON LAND & PARISH MAINTENANCE: Attention is paid to the upkeep of all public spaces and Parish assets. The Parish Grounds Manager ensures that the Parish Cemetery is a fitting place for remembrance. A scheme to improve the turning area for hearses at the Parish Cemetery was approved during the year, and funding made available to fix the existing wrought iron entrance gates and provide a new field gate and water but. Attention has also been given to ensuring that all village greens are attractive and accessible to all. The Parish Council wishes to thank a number of stalwart local volunteers for the provision of flowers at the two war memorials and the mill green and for the festive Christmas tree lights that provide pleasure for residents and tourists alike. During the year the Parish Council also worked with Cornwall Police and children from Altarnun School to refresh the murals in both community bus shelters. The results were delightful, bringing pleasure to many.

FINANCIALS: The Parish Council received a successful external audit of the 2013/14 accounts. It produced a viable budget for 2014/15 in line with Cornwall Council guidelines built on an annual precept award of £8262 and CTS grant of £750. The bulk of Parish expenditure, some 51%, went on parish grounds maintenance. Fees and Administration charges accounted for a further 36%. Donations in the order of 13% went towards costs associated with the temporary use of the Church Hall toilets; the purchase of Armistice Day wreaths; bus shelter cleaning; Altarnun & Bolventor Church Cemetery maintenance; provision of disabled access to Altarnun Church Hall; new Christmas lights; new table tennis tables and commemorative fleeces for members of the local Brownie troop to recognise the centenary of the Brownies movement. The external audit of the 2014/15 accounts will be submitted ahead of the required deadline. The provisional budget for 2015/16 was set in December 2014 in line with guidelines from Cornwall Council with a small increase sought in the Parish Precept, taking this to £8500. The first Precept Payment & CTC grant was paid in April 2015.

CONCLUSION: A year of stabilisation, consolidation and sound preparation for the year ahead which is likely to become more challenging, possibly more controversial. As Clerk I should like to express my appreciation to the members of the Parish Council for their diligence and pro-active approach to setting the Council agenda and budget; and for representing the wider interests of the parish, its residents and visitors alike.

Clerk to Altarnun Parish Council

1st May 2015

This report was submitted for consideration of the Parish Council and approval was given at the Public Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, 6th May 2015.